Amendments to the Specification:

On page 1, after the title, under Cross Reference to Related Applications, at line 5, please replace the first paragraph beginning "This application claims the benefit..." with the following new paragraph:

- - This application is a continuation application of U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/538,864, filed March 29, 2000; which claims the benefit of U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 60/126,736, filed March 29, 1999; U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 60/127, 198, filed March 31, 1999; U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 60/169,162, filed December 6, 1999; U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 60/177,740 filed January 21, 2000; and U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 60/177,739, filed January 21, 2000; all of which are expressly incorporated by reference in their entirety. - -

At page 14, line 26 please amend the paragraph as follows:

- - The NCBI Basic Local Alignment Search Tool (BLAST) (Altschul et al., 1990) is available from several sources, including the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI, Bethesda, MD) and on the Internet, for use in connection with the sequence analysis programs blastp, blastn, blastx, tblastn and tblastx. It can be accessed at http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/BLAST. A description of how to determine sequence identity using this program is available at http://www.nchi.nlm.nih.gov/BLAST/blast.help.html. - -.